

## Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-09 ISO-00 CAB-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00

DOT-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 FAA-00 L-03 PA-02 PRS-01

USIA-15 AF-08 ARA-10 EUR-12 NEA-10 IO-13 OC-05 CCO-00

SS-15 H-02 /125 W

----- 130019

R 170300Z APR 76

FM AMCONSUL FUKUOKA

TO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

SECSTATE WASHDC 551

INFO AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE

AMCONSUL NAHA

AMCONSUL SAPPORO

UNCLAS FUKUOKA 0070

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAIR, JA

SUBJECT: SUIT FILED TO CURTAIL TRAFFIC AT JAPAN'S THIRD MAJOR  
AIRPORT

1. BEGIN SUMMARY. INSPIRED BY THE SUCCESSFUL SUIT IN OSAKA,  
RESIDENTS AROUND FUKUOKA AIRPORT RECENTLY FILED SUIT FOR A TRAFFIC  
BAN FROM 9PM TO 7AM AND 2 MILLION YEN PER PERSON IN COMPENSATION.  
FUKUOKA, JAPAN'S THIRD MAJOR AIRPORT, IS OPEN TO JUMBO JETS.  
IT HAS 56 INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS PER WEEK BY 5 MAJOR AIRLINES,  
AND 120 FLIGHTS PER DAY BY JAPAN'S THREE DOMESTIC AIRLINES. IF  
THE SUIT IS SUCCESSFUL, IT WOULD ELIMINATE ONLY FIVE FLIGHTS PER  
DAY AND VERY LITTLE NOISE, BUT WOULD PLACE OPERATING RESTRICTIONS  
ON FUKUOKA FOR THE FIRST TIME. RESTRICTIONS WOULD NOT AFFECT  
INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS OR THE GROWING NUMBER OF CHARTER FLIGHTS  
USING FUKUOKA. AIRPORT OFFICIALS SAY THE OUTCOME DEPENDS LARGELY  
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ON THE FINAL DECISION IN THE OSAKA CASE AND THAT THE GOVERNMENT

HAS ALREADY TAKEN POSITIVE STEPS TO ALLEVIATE THE NOISE PROBLEM.  
END SUMMARY.

2. INSPIRED BY THE SUCCESSFUL ANTI-NOISE SUIT IN OSAKA, RESIDENTS AROUND FUKUOKA AIRPORT FILED SUIT IN FUKUOKA DISTRICT COURT ON MARCH 30 TO HAVE AIR TRAFFIC BANNED AT FUKUOKA AIRPORT FROM 2100 TO 0700. THEY ARE ALSO DEMANDING TWO MILLION YEN PER PERSON COMPENSATION FOR THEIR SUFFERING AND 20,000 YEN PER MONTH PER PERSON UNTIL THE FLIGHTS IN QUESTION ARE CANCELLED. FOLLOWING THE FILING OF THE SUIT, MEMBERS OF THE THREE ORGANIZATIONS PROTESTING AIRCRAFT NOISE MARCHED THROUGH DOWNTOWN FUKUOKA TO PUBLICIZE THEIR DEMANDS.

3. FUKUOKA IS THE ONLY AIRPORT ON THE MAIN ISLANDS OF JAPAN OUTSIDE OF TOKYO AND OSAKA SERVED BY MAJOR INTERNATIONAL AIRLINES, AND, UNLIKE OSAKA, IS OPEN TO JUMBO JETS. THERE ARE CURRENTLY 56 INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS A WEEK AT THE AIRPORT, WITH KOREAN AIRLINES, CATHAY PACIFIC, AIR FRANCE, AIR SIAM AND JAPAN AIRLINES PROVIDING DIRECT SERVICE TO SEOUL, PUSAN, HONG KONG, TAIPEI, PEKING, MANILA AND HONOLULU. CHINA AIRLINES SERVICE FROM TAIPEI, SCHEDULED TO RESUME APRIL 1, HAS BEEN POSTPONED PENDING FURTHER JAPAN-ROC TALKS.

4. THE TIME RESTRICTION ASKED FOR IN THE SUIT WILL DO LITTLE TO CUT NOISE, SINCE IT WILL AFFECT ONLY FIVE OF THE 120 DAILY DOMESTIC FLIGHTS USING FUKUOKA AIRPORT. THERE ARE CURRENTLY NO TAKEOFFS AND ONLY FIVE ARRIVALS AFTER 2100 AND NO MOVEMENTS FROM 2210 TO 0700. NO INTERNATIONAL TAKEOFFS OR LANDINGS OCCUR DURING THE PROPOSED RESTRICTED PERIOD.

5. THE SUIT, IF SUCCESSFUL, WOULD FOR THE FIRST TIME RESTRICT MOVEMENTS AT FUKUOKA AIRPORT, PRESENTLY THE ONLY MAJOR AIRPORT ON THE MAIN ISLANDS OF JAPAN WITH NO RESTRICTIONS ON HOURS OF OPERATION. AIRLINES CURRENTLY CURTAIL THEIR OPERATIONS AT NIGHT AT THE REQUEST OF AIRPORT MANAGEMENT. HOWEVER, TECHNICALLY FUKUOKA AIRPORT IS OPEN 24 HOURS PER DAY AND THERE IS NO LEGAL OBLIGATION TO CURTAIL NIGHT OPERATIONS. THE SUIT WOULD MAKE THESE VOLUNTARY RESTRICTIONS MANDATORY AND STOP EVENING FLIGHTS FROM TOKYO AND OSAKA.

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6. ALTHOUGH FUKUOKA AIRPORT IS STILL OFFICIALLY CONSIDERED A SECONDARY AIRPORT, IT IS FULLY EQUIPPED TO ICAO STANDARDS. THE CONGESTION AT TOKYO AND OSAKA HAS PROMPTED GREATER USE OF FUKUOKA FOR CHARTER FLIGHTS AND TECHNICAL STOPS. UNLIKE TOKYO AND OSAKA, ADDITIONAL FLIGHTS CAN BE ACCOMMODATED EASILY AT FUKUOKA AND IT HAS NOT HAD TO RESORT TO ALLOCATING SLOTS OR RESTRICTING TECHNICAL STOPS TO CERTAIN HOURS. INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS ARE CURRENTLY LIMITED TO DAYTIME, MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY, SINCE

IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS AUTHORITIES DO NOT HAVE ENOUGH MANPOWER FOR NIGHT AND SUNDAY OPERATION. THE CURRENT SUIT WILL HAVE NO EFFECT ON THE AIRPORT'S ABILITY TO ACCOMODATE CHARTERS, SINCE DAY-TIME OPERATIONS WOULD NOT AFFECTED.

7. AIRPORT OFFICIALS FEEL THE OUTCOME OF THE SUIT IN FUKUOKA WILL HINGE ON THE PENDING APPEAL TO THE HIGH COURT OF THE OSAKA DECISION WHICH, IF UPHELD, WOULD GREATLY INCREASE THE PLAINTIFFS' CHANCES IN THE FUKUOKA SUIT. THEY POINT OUT THAT THE TIME RESTRICTIONS WOULD DO LITTLE TO CUT NOISE. IN ADDITION, THE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN WORKING TO ALLEVIATE THE NOISE PROBLEM FOR SOME TIME. IT CURRENTLY PAYS FOR SOUNDPROOFING HOUSES, AND IN JUNE WILL IMPLEMENT A PLAN TO PAY RESIDENTS TO MOVE OUT OF THE HIGHEST NOISE AREAS, A PROCESS WHICH WILL TAKE ABOUT FIVE YEARS TO COMPLETE. THERE ARE NO FEASIBLE ALTERNATIVES TO THE CURRENT AIRPORT LOCATION AND NO PLANS ARE BEING MADE TO MOVE IT.

8. COMMENT. WITH ONLY FIVE OF 125 DAILY FLIGHTS FALLING IN THE PROPOSED RESTRICTED TIME, CURTAILING OPERATIONS WILL NOT DO MUCH TO CUT NOISE AROUND FUKUOKA AIRPORT. THE AMOUNT OF COMPENSATION ASKED IS CONSIDERABLY MORE THAN THAT AWARDED IN OSAKA AND IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO TELL WHAT THE FINAL AWARDS, IF ANY, WILL BE. THE DECISION IS LARGELY DEPENDENT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE OSAKA CASE. IF THE REQUESTED OPERATING RESTRICTIONS ARE IMPLEMENTED, IT WOULD NOT SERIOUSLY DISRUPT CURRENT OPERATIONS AT FUKUOKA, BUT MAY HINDER EXPANSION OF SERVICE IN THE AREA. IF, AS A RESULT OF THE SUIT, FUKUOKA FINDS ITSELF PLACED UNDER OPERATING RESTRICTIONS THE MAIN ISLANDS OF JAPAN WILL BE LEFT WITHOUT A 24-HOUR AIRPORT. END COMMENT.  
RICHARDSON

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## Message Attributes

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